



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**Contact:**

Beth Draeger, RDN, CD, CBE  
Public Health Nutrition Supervisor  
715-839-4718

[Elizabeth.draeger@co.eau-claire.wi.us](mailto:Elizabeth.draeger@co.eau-claire.wi.us)

**Healthy Weight Week: Celebrate Healthy Diet-Free Living Habits that Last a Lifetime**

EAU CLAIRE, Wis.- January 21, 2015 –With the beginning of a new year, now is the time when most people initiate some type of change in their diet or physical activity to lose weight or to become healthier. During *Healthy Weight Week*, we celebrate healthy diet-free living habits that last a lifetime and prevent eating and weight problems.

“In Eau Claire County, 29% of adults are considered obese and 23% of adults report no leisure-time physical activity. Many health complications can come from simply being overweight, including but limited to heart disease, diabetes, and high blood pressure,” says Beth Draeger, Public Health Nutrition Supervisor of the Eau Claire City-County Health Department.

Mindless eating is one factor that can lead to being overweight. “According to Brian Wansink, PH. D. author of *Mindless Eating*, “most of us don’t overeat because we’re hungry. We overeat because of family and friends, packages and plates, names and numbers, labels and lights, colors and candles, shapes and smells, distractions and distances, cupboards and containers”. According to his studies as to why people eat the way they do, the average person makes around 250 decisions about food every day – breakfast or no breakfast? Pop-tart or bagel? Part of it or all of it? Kitchen or car? Yet out of these 200+ food decisions, we cannot really explain why we make the choices we make.

*Healthy Weight Week* encourages people to, stop dieting, and pursue *livable* and *sustainable* healthy lifestyles through eating mindfully, living actively and feeling good about themselves. Here are a few tips on how we as a community can work towards reducing our obesity rates and implementing a more mindful community with eating and physical activity.

- **Increase Physical Activity:** Simply move more. Involve yourself in a variety of active activities.
- **Reduce Screen time:** Limit total screen time for children to no more than 2 hours a day and don’t put a television or computer in a child’s room. Have children earn extra screen time by being physically active.
- **Increase fruit and vegetable access, availability and consumption:** Support and promote community gardens, establish family meal times, and be role model of healthy eating for children.
- **Encourage healthy food& beverage consumption:** Limit access to foods and drinks of little nutritional value in your home, include water and fat free or low fat milk meals and snacks.
- **Increase breastfeeding:** Give mothers the support they need to breastfeed their babies, including education, time, flexibility and emotional encouragement.

Go to <https://www.dhs.wisconsin.gov/physical-activity/stateplan/index.htm> to read the complete Wisconsin Nutrition, Physical Activity & Obesity state plan.